



# HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

COURAGE HONOR INTEGRITY

**House Bill 425 - Oppose**

## Public Safety- Untraceable Firearms

### Letter of opposition to the House Judiciary Committee

February 7, 2022

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am pleased to send this letter today to you in opposition to House Bill 425, which changes the requirements for firearm owners and would turn unknowing law-abiding citizens of Maryland into criminals, if this passes in its current form.

As the Sheriff of Harford County, I believe it is the right of all law-abiding citizens to own a firearm. This bill, as written, will have serious detrimental consequences for gun collectors, hobbyists and legal gun owners in the State and will turn them into criminals overnight. The overwhelming majority of those building their own firearms are doing so for lawful purposes. In addition, the registration and resale requirements are unattainable and potentially in violation of federal law.

This legislation is a clear example of symbolism over substance. This bill attempts to demonstrate to the public that there is an effort to be "Tough On Crime," however, this bill does not address what really needs to occur to bring down crime numbers in Maryland. That is to actually punish the criminals for the crimes they are committing. Thousands of people a year in our major cities are losing their lives due to soft on crime policies, decriminalization, State's Attorneys refusing to prosecute cases, and lenient sentences for criminals.

These are areas the General Assembly needs to address if they are serious about bringing down crime numbers and saving lives.



While buzz words “like ghost guns” or “untraceable firearms” are designed to scare the public and imply that these laws are being offered to combat crime, this legislation will do nothing to deter criminals from illegally trafficking unregistered firearms and will not be an effective tool in bringing down the number of shootings and murders in Baltimore City and Maryland.

I ask for you to be on the side of law-abiding citizens and on the side of protecting our citizen’s Constitutional Rights by opposing HB 425.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Jeffrey R. Gahler

Maybe it would be better if you went after criminals with the same vigor that many of you went after our police officers last year. You managed to get police officers to be afraid to function in their profession, maybe you will have the same outcome with criminals actually afraid to function in theirs!